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The Effects of Thirteenth-Century Cultural Changes on Libraries

K. W. Humphreys

There are many factors that make up the significant difference between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Europe. From the social point of view, there was a movement from the countryside to the towns and the growth of guilds. The arrival of the new learning as a substantial force and, in the sphere of intellectual activity, the founding of universities had a powerful influence. The coming of the friars brought a new fervor to the field of religious development coupled with a strong incentive for study. Merchants were moving across Europe, carrying or arranging for the carriage of merchandise: wool from England, silks and embroidery from Tuscany, carpets and dried fruits from North Africa, timber and grain from Poland and Russia. Along the great trade routes passed the pilgrims and the scholars transporting books and ideas between various centers. The dissemination of works written in the second half of the twelfth century indicates the speed with which ideas were transmitted; for example, Abelard's writings were rapidly diffused throughout Europe, as his works were present in the Upper Danube and Upper Rhine between 1142 and 1178.¹

In the twelfth century the libraries of the monastic orders were still being built up by scribes in the scriptorium, the normal source of acquisitions. The contents of these libraries reflect the intellectual interests of the period, although some of them had been growing several centuries from the productions of the scriptorium and from gifts, often important collections.

In England the library of Christ Church Canterbury by about 1170 may have had some 600 volumes. A partial catalogue of that date records about 200 volumes, but there is no theology, medicine, or law which could represent some two-thirds of the collection. This is not an excessive estimate

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—later at a much smaller house at Lanthony there were nearly 500 volumes, and there were 400 at Durham. We have some information about a number of other Benedictine foundations at Rochester, Bury St. Edmunds, Peterborough, Burton-upon-Trent, Reading, Whitby, and Coventry.² The Augustinians at Bridlington and Waltham and the Cistercians at Flaxley had similar collections by the end of the century, although their interests had been more restricted earlier.³ A comparison of the holdings of their monasteries just before or just after 1200 gives a fairly common pattern.⁴

There were full texts of the Bible and copies of individual books in most libraries with the more recent glosses that were the result of Biblical studies at Laon. The four major Church Fathers—Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and Ambrose—were available almost everywhere, with Augustine the most popular. Gregory, in part perhaps because of his early association with the Church in England, was well studied in the schools.

Other authors of the early Christian period were well represented: Basil, Origen, Leo the Great, Orosius, Gelasius, Ephraim, John Cassian, Cassiodore, Josephus, Hilary of Poitiers, and Peter of Ravenna. There were also works by John Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Gregory Nazianzus.

From a later period we have the Spanish writers Martin of Braga, Ildefonse of Toledo, and the ever-present Isidore. One of the most popular British authors was Bede; his theological, historical, and scientific works are found almost universally (e.g., thirteen at Reading, twelve each at Bury and Rochester, and eleven at Durham).

Of the authors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries recorded in catalogues of British libraries about the year 1200, it is significant that only a few were Englishmen, most of whom had spent time in France. Many of the authors held posts in the English Church and lived much of their lives in the country but owed their training to schools on the Continent, particularly in France (like the archbishops of Canterbury, Lanfranc and Anselm, whose works, especially those of Anselm, were very popular).

From the French schools there is a good selection: Bernard of Clairvaux, Andrew of Laon and Anselm of Laon, Gilbert de la Porrée, Hugh of St. Victor and Richard of St. Victor, Peter of Poitiers, and Peter of Blois. Two of the most influential texts for the rest of the Middle Ages, the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, were found in most libraries, but so far no commentaries on the latter have been identified.

Collections of sermons, many anonymous, and lives of the saints were generally available. Historical works were very popular. In many of the great houses, there was considerable historical activity not only in the continuation of the annals embodied in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle but also in accounts of the houses themselves and of England in general. This

was perhaps the most important factor in the twelfth-century renaissance that developed in Britain.

Grammatical works were common, with Priscian and Donatus almost everywhere. Most of the Roman literary authors were available in monastic libraries, with Virgil and Horace being the most popular.

There were no rich collections on law in British libraries during this period; the *Decreta* of Gratian is the only text that was found in a number of houses.

Some of the important contributions to the development of scientific thought in the twelfth century were made by Englishmen both at home and in Spain. Although there were copies of arithmetical books and computational texts in some libraries, scientific works were not prevalent.

The exciting developments that were taking place in Spain, Sicily, and wherever translators were making Greek and Arabic science and philosophy available to the West were only beginning to be appreciated by a few in England.⁵ The number of such texts in British libraries before 1200 was very small, and the same was true of the new medical treatises. Only the older texts were to be found, with an occasional more recent author like Roger of Salerno or Bartholomaeus of Salerno.

The evidence from a small number of catalogues that have survived from the twelfth century is supplemented and confirmed by the manuscripts from the period that are extant. The pattern of the collections is surprisingly standard and gives a reasonably accurate picture of the monastic library of the time.

The use made of these books by the ordinary monk was not very significant. The books on grammar and the texts of Roman literature were likely to be schoolbooks for the novices and others—as well as some of the elementary books on music, geometry, and so forth. The rest of the books, at least in the earlier years, were issued annually. Benedict had indicated that “in this season of Lent all shall receive a book from the library which they shall read from beginning to end; these books are to be given out at the beginning of Lent.”⁶ These instructions were expanded by other compilers of rules for Benedictines, Cluniacs, and Augustinians. The constitutions promulgated by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, toward the end of the eleventh century were probably observed in most houses.⁷ On the Monday after the first Sunday in Lent

the librarian should have all the books, save those that were given out for reading the previous year, collected on a carpet in the chapter house; last year's books should be carried in by those who have had them and they are to be warned of this by the librarian in chapter the previous day. The passage from the Rule of St. Benedict concerning this observance of Lent shall be read, and when a sermon has been

made on this the librarian shall read out a list of the books which the brethren had the previous year. When each hears his name read out he shall return the book which was given him to read, and anyone who is conscious that he has not read in full the book he received shall confess his fault prostrate and ask for pardon. Then the aforesaid librarian shall give to each of the brethren another book to read and when the books have been distributed in order he shall at the same chapter write a list of books and those who have received them.⁸

The few lists that have survived are much later but show that most of the books issued were long treatises or commentaries. It seems likely that by the early fourteenth century only a specially selected collection of books was put out for the annual distribution.⁹

It is evident, however, that each monk had only one book to read during the year—and some did not even manage that. Their range was very restricted and was limited to a contemplative rather than an active study of the text. There was no opportunity for a comparison of works and thus no opportunity for academic exercises.

This, then, was the situation about 1200. We should now look for the factors that caused fundamental changes. In the late eleventh and the twelfth centuries monastic and cathedral schools were developing the basic study of the Bible from a scholastic attitude that can be traced back to St. Augustine. The application of the didactic method to Biblical commentary led to a systematization of theological thought. At Auxerre and Laon a group of collaborators, mainly now anonymous but surrounding the teaching of Andrew of Laon and of Ralph of Laon with Gilbert the Universal, settled the accepted gloss to the Bible, the *glossa ordinaria*.¹⁰ This became established at Paris, especially by Peter Lombard, whose *Sentences*, a systematic treatment of Christian theology, became the standard textbook for several centuries, attracting hundreds of commentaries.¹¹ In this way the attention of scholars was concentrated on the study of accepted texts that were to be added to during the thirteenth century.

This attitude to Biblical study was matched by that for civil and canon law. The body of the Roman law as codified by Justinian in the sixth century, the *Corpus juris civilis*, was glossed by jurists at the school of Bologna. Some hundred thousand survive—mostly unpublished. The glossators were themselves the authorities to whom commentators referred. The glosses were later combined into an *apparatus* to give a continuous interpretation of the text of the *Corpus*. All the Justinian law books were provided with *apparatus* at Bologna by the end of the twelfth century or the early thirteenth century, culminating in the officially accepted version by Accursius, the *glossa ordinaria*.¹²

The corpus of canon law was similarly treated. The first law book to be

glossed was the *Concordia discordantium canonum*, generally called the *Decreta* of Gratian, compiled at Bologna in the middle of the twelfth century. Canon law could not be codified in the same way as civil law for the basic texts: collections of *Decreta* or *Decretales* were being added to constantly with new ecclesiastical provisions. Nevertheless, the glossed texts by outstanding jurists became the accepted works for academic study.¹³

The idea of officially recognized texts that were the basis of teaching in universities and later in the schools of the friars had a fundamental influence on the history of the book and on library provisions.

Another factor in changing the pattern of study and research by the end of the twelfth century was the advent of the "new learning." In the second half of the century translators in Toledo, Sicily, and Salerno were making available in Latin the Greek and Arabic texts of Aristotle and his Arabian commentators, scientific treatises, and medical works of Galen and Hippocrates and of other authors previously unknown to the West.¹⁴

The new Aristotle was introduced in the first decade of the twelfth century. Alexander of Nequam's familiarity with current scientific thought was, not surprisingly, matched by his belief in the supremacy of Aristotle's authority. He was one of the first Englishmen to be acquainted with both the Greek-Latin and Arabic-Latin translations, yet most of his works were written after his retirement from the schools, and there is no evidence that he ever taught this new learning at Oxford.¹⁵ In fact it seems likely that St. Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, and John Blund were the first to lecture on Aristotle in the Schools at Oxford—Edmund on the *Elenchi* and Blund on the *libri naturales*. The latter is a striking example of the penetration of Aristotle and Avicenna into Oxford and Paris schools. It would appear that Aristotelian learning came to Oxford about the same time that it reached Paris, between 1206 and 1209.¹⁶ Its influence was wide and deep: by the middle of the thirteenth century it had covered in range the whole *Corpus Aristotelicum vetustius*.

The renaissance in the study of medicine began at Salerno in the eleventh century, when Constantine the African translated a number of Greek texts into Latin, especially Galen's *Art of Medicine* and his *Therapeutics*.¹⁷ The first great Western surgeon was Roger of Salerno. The work begun at Salerno was continued at Montpellier and later at Bologna, Padua, and Paris, which succeeded Salerno. Teaching was based on works of Galen and Hippocrates; Arabic and Jewish works also became accepted texts, like the *Canon* of Avicenna, Isaac Israel on fevers, works of Rhazes, the Byzantine Theophilus on the pulse and on urine (both of which supplied the commonest form of diagnosis in the Middle Ages), and Dioscorides, *De Materia Medica*.

Scientific analysis was largely influenced by the "new logic" (recently translated works of Aristotle), which, with the "old logic," was considered

by Grosseteste and others to offer the basic methodology for their research, although Roger Bacon preferred mathematics.

The schools of Salerno, Bologna, Paris, and Oxford that had flourished in the twelfth century became universities shortly before or shortly after 1200.¹⁸ The curricula probably varied between universities, but we have sufficient evidence to indicate a clear understanding of their courses: it is certain that most of the texts mentioned above that had become acceptable for academic study were the basis for instruction. Their importance for the history of the book and of libraries lies in the emphasis on study rather than on contemplative reading. Books became tools rather than the decorative symbols of the monastic house. There needed to be easy access to the texts by student and teacher, and it became increasingly necessary for these texts to be correct, although they were produced cheaply. The control of scribes was one of the responsibilities undertaken by universities. The book trade had come into existence before the advent of the universities. Peter of Blois about 1170 tells a story about a bookseller in Paris who cheated him.¹⁹ Professional scribes at about the same period were used to produce books at Abingdon, Rochester, Winchester, and possibly at St. Albans;²⁰ they probably were already established at Oxford and Paris. Universities, anxious to protect the standard of the purity of the teaching materials and the pockets of their members, organized the book trade in their cities. This is not the place to reiterate an account of the *pecia* system.²¹ It is sufficient now to state that stationers (officials of the university) let out approved texts for hire by the gathering (i.e., *pecia*) for students and teachers to copy themselves. The correctness of the text was controlled by the university. Professional scribes could be employed by the stationer to copy complete works.

Whereas earlier the productions of monastic scriptoria had mainly been large books with few abbreviations and often splendidly illuminated, a scholar's book was small and portable, full of abbreviations and rubricated rather than illuminated: the rubrication was used as a visual aid to the reader. The book developed in the thirteenth century to a standardized form depending on its contents. All glossed books of the Bible or the *Decreta* with glosses would have the same layout. In fact there is a more utilitarian and even aggressive attitude toward the written page than in previous centuries. Signposts such as running headlines, marginal letters of the alphabet designating individual extracts, marginal notation of the authors cited, rubrics dividing the subjects, paragraph marks distinguishing the extracts from one another, and a table of chapters are all intended to make the task of the reader easier.²²

Other enterprises were also concerned to improve the ability of a reader to obtain references and to understand them. The first in importance was the *Concordance* to the Bible compiled at St. Jaques, the Dominican house at

Paris, under the editorship of Hugh of St. Cher. It was probably in existence by 1239. This pioneer work devised the reference system: each appearance of a word was indicated by the book of the Bible, by the chapter divisions that had been devised (probably by Stephen Langton, a few years earlier), and by one of the letters A to G to indicate relative position within the chapter. The method had depended first on the acceptance of the use of full alphabetization that had been earlier opposed by the logical index, that is, one based on the natural progress from one idea to another (*angelus* could not precede *deus*). Also about the same time the Roman system was displaced by Arabic numeration, which simplified complicated numbers. Both these innovations had some influence on thirteenth-century library catalogues.²³

Once a *Concordance* of the Bible had been circulated, it was not long before there were indexes to other works, especially those of the Fathers, the "authorities" for Christian doctrine. Robert Kilwardby, regent master of theology in Oxford (1256–1261), undertook a major project on three levels to provide access to the core of "authority." He produced chapter-by-chapter synopses of sixty-one works of Augustine, a work of John Chrysostom, Ambrose's *Hexameron*, Hugh of St. Victor's *Didascalicon*, and Peter Lombard's *Sentences*; then an alphabetical subject index to each of forty-six works of Augustine, four of Anselm, and the *Sentences*; and finally a composite alphabetical subject concordance to major works of Augustine, Ambrose, Boethius, Isidore, and Anselm, with occasional references as well to the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor and to the *Sentences*. With such aids the reader could feel he had a controlled access to most of the basic texts necessary for the composition of sermons or the preparation of lectures.²⁴

The last factor in the process of change from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries was the coming of the friars: the Dominicans or Order of Preachers, the Franciscans or the Minorites, the Carmelites, and the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine or Austin friars. The two major Orders were founded at the beginning of the century, and the other two were established in the second half. The Carmelites and Austin Hermits adopted many of the objectives and practices of the older Orders, to which we must look for innovations in library economy.

St. Francis began by preaching the need for the simple approach to Christianity by example, and his message was based on his belief in the importance of poverty. His earliest followers, therefore, were concerned with continuing this fundamental tenet; later, those who attempted to maintain the purity of the founder's views, the Spirituals, contended through two centuries against those who wished to enrich the Order by building fine churches (like Santa Croce in Florence) and to establish considerable libraries. Although the idea of poverty was not fully adhered

to, a friar was nonetheless not allowed to own anything himself, and we find that in order to abide by this rule the administrative arrangements of the Order for the use of books were many and complex. This was also true of the other Orders.²⁵

St. Dominic's original aim was to provide a corps of preachers to fight heresy in Languedoc; although this aspect of his initial intention was continued through the later unsavory Inquisition, the main trend of activity was toward preaching and hearing confessions. It was early realized that to accomplish this end the friars must be well educated. St. Dominic decided that convents should be set up in university centers and sent seven of his original members to Paris in 1217. Dominican houses were established at Bologna in 1218 and at Montpellier and Oxford in 1221. The basic structure for Dominican studies was formulated between 1216 and 1220 under the supervision of Dominic himself. The fundamental principle was that no convent should be founded without a doctor of theology. In order to produce the needed number of doctors, the Preachers set up a system of education on three levels: the conventual *studia* for elementary training, the *studia particularia* or provincial schools with an advanced curriculum of religious study, and the *studia generalia*, where the most promising students were educated to the doctorate level. Such a series of courses of study required the support of book provision so that each convent would have a library. The friars' life differed from the monastic regime, with its emphasis on prayer and work; friars were expected to devote as much of their time as possible to study.²⁶

The Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was recognized as a mendicant Order by Gregory IX in 1229. The early members of the Order had settled in Palestine from the middle of the twelfth century, living as hermits. When they fled to Sicily, Italy, and England as a result of the renewed attacks of the Saracens on Palestine, they were soon joined by new disciples who were disposed to follow the example of the Dominicans and Franciscans. New constitutions were formulated on the Dominican model, and the Carmelites became one of the four influential mendicant Orders.

The last to be established on the lines of the two earlier Orders was the Ordo Fratrum Eremitarum Sancti Augustini constituted by Pope Alexander IV in 1256. The hermits had existed in Tuscany, Lombardy, and Romagna at the end of the twelfth century, living according to the so-called Rule of St. Augustine. The Hermits of Lombardy joined the Hermits of Romagna in 1253 and were united with those of Tuscany three years later. Their constitutions, ratified at Ratisbon (Regensburg) in 1290, were modeled on those of the Dominicans.

Not only the Dominicans but all the Orders of friars set up houses at universities in their pursuit of learning. The contents of their libraries were very different from those of the monasteries. No longer were they

content with the works of the Fathers, some copies of the classics, one or two books on the natural sciences, and a sprinkling of writings on systematic theology. Instead, the new texts, especially Aristotelian, were collected in the various *studia*. Each house was recommended by Humbert of Romans (the master general of the Dominicans, 1254–1263, who as we shall see had a major influence on library practice) to have the following types of books: the glossed Bible (whole or in part) and the Bible without gloss, the *Summa de casibus* of Raymond of Penafort, the *Summa* of Godfrey of Trano, William Peyraut's *De vitiis et virtutibus*, a *Summa de quaestionibus*, concordances and interpretations of Greek and Hebrew words, Gratian's *Decreta* and the *Decretales*, *Distinctiones morales* (i.e., lists of theological terms in alphabetical order), sermons, histories (presumably including Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*), Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, chronicles, lives of the saints, and a *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

The evidence for friars' libraries in the thirteenth century is unfortunately very sparse. Only one catalogue exists of the libraries of convents of any Order; we have most information for the Dominicans. The most interesting surviving document is a list of the books issued to members of the Barcelona convent from 1255 that tells us which texts were in demand.²⁷ Included were part of a glossed Bible and a volume of *Postillae* on Matthew, Mark, and John. The important aids to study were the *Sentences* and commentaries and the various *Summas*; Barcelona also had the *Sentences* with commentaries by Aquinas, Odo Rigaud, Albert the Great, and Alexander of Hales. Also listed was a copy of the *Historia Scholastica*. Other theological works included various *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*, *Vitae Sanctorum*, and *Quaestiones de veritate* of Thomas Aquinas.

The result of the influence of Albert the Great and others in popularizing the works of Aristotle and of Arabic philosophers was evident by the middle of the thirteenth century. For instance, commentaries on the works of Aristotle were on loan to members of the convent: Albert on *De anima*, Grosseteste on *Liber priorum* and anonymously on *Libri priorum, posteriorum, topicorum*, and *elanchorum*. Grammatical works were Priscian and the more modern *Doctrinale* of Alexander of Villedieu.

Canon law is provided for with the texts of the *Decreta* and *Decretales* and Raymond of Penafort's *Summa de casibus*. Godfrey of Trano's *Summa*, as well as *Summa de dispensationibus* and *Summa de censuris ecclesiasticis*. Two collections of sermons complete the list.

The only inventory of a conventual library is that for Lucca in 1278.²⁸ Of the ninety-six volumes listed, fourteen were glossed books of the Bible, to which were added (for Biblical studies) Aquinas on Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, *Postillae* on the Twelve Prophets, a new concordance, and three old concordances. There were four copies of the *Sentences* (with commentaries by Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis, Thomas Aquinas, and

Peter of Tarentaise) and the *Historia Scholastica*. The only nontheological work was the *Decretales antiquae*. It was a small collection containing the essentials for the study of the Bible.

Taking together the list of books left to St. Catherine's Convent at Pisa (ca. 1278) and the thirteenth-century volumes that survive, we get a similar pattern.²⁹ Thirteen volumes of Biblical commentaries, two commentaries on the *Sentences*, *Quodlibeta* and *Quaestiones*, and the *Correctorium* of John of Paris represent the material for Biblical studies. Grammatical works are Priscian and the dictionaries of Papias and Brito. The legal works are, as usual, the *Decreta* and *Decretales* and the *Summa* of Azo, Raymond of Penafort, and Godfrey of Trano. Three collections of sermons are the only preaching aids. A collection of Aristotelian and Arabic philosophical works distinguishes this from the other libraries.

To take extant thirteenth-century friars' books as an indication of the contents of their libraries in that century can be misleading, because they may have been acquired later. In default of other evidence, however, it is reasonably acceptable. The surviving Dominican manuscripts of the thirteenth century in England include Bibles and glossed books, the *Sentences* and the *Historia Scholastica*, works of Augustine, Gregory, Anselm, Bernard, Caesar of Arles, and Hugh of St. Victor. There are two copies of Cicero; Aristotle and the Arabic commentators are not represented, and there is no natural science or medicine.³⁰

Evidence for the early history of Franciscan libraries is based on two lists of books and on surviving manuscripts. The first is a list of fourteen books given in 1266 by Roger of Thoriz, archdeacon of Exeter, to the Friars Minor at Exeter.³¹ They consist mainly of glossed books of the Bible and *Postillae*, Alexander of Hales on book three and most of book four of the *Sentences*, and the great *Concordance*. There were some works of Augustine and the *Summa* of William of Auxerre.

The other list is of forty-two volumes brought into the Order at Ipswich by friars and by laymen before 1300.³² One Bible is placed in the refectory, six service books in the choir, and a second Bible is taken by the provincial minister for the use of the province. There remain several other service books, three glossed books of the Bible, a *Concordance* in two volumes, a *Legendae sanctorum* and a life of St. Kentigern, commentaries on the *Sentences* by Bonaventura and Richard Middleton, and some volume of sermons. The nontheological works include the *Philosophia naturalis* of Aristotle, the *Perspectiva* probably by John Pecham, the *Decretales* and Bernard of Compostella's *Casus* for canon law, Papias and Huguccio for grammar, Cicero, Bartholomaeus's *De proprietatibus rerum*, and a work entitled *Barlaam*.

One of the great centers in England for a tradition of learning was the Franciscan house at Oxford, based on the teaching of Robert Grosseteste, one of the outstanding scholars of his day. He had been invited to lecture

in the convent from its earliest years and left his books at his death in 1253. Regrettably, we have only a scant knowledge of the scope of this bequest. Of his own works we know that he gave his *Epistolae*, *De cura pastoralis*, the sermons *Natis et educatis* and *Contra luxuriam*, commentaries on Paul's *Epistles* and the *Psalms*, *Hexameron*, and notes on Aristotle's *Physics*. A *Quadratura circuli* is not by Grosseteste; there was also his *Psalter*. Other works in the convent were works of Augustine, Gregory and Jerome, Rabanus Maurus, Clement of Lantony's *Super Evangelia*, and a copy of the Latin version of Suidas.³³

About 100 thirteenth-century manuscripts from English Franciscan houses survive, of which 25 are copies of the Bible and glosses.³⁴ Augustine and Gregory are found in five houses, but, apart from a volume of *Patristica* from Lincoln and the *Speculum* of Adalbert (excerpts from Gregory's *Moralia*) at Hereford, there are no other writings of the Fathers. Earlier writers include Isidore, Cassiodore, Josephus (2), and Bede (2). The twelfth-century Paris authors present were Peter Comestor (4), Bernard (3), Peter Lombard (2), Peter of Blois (2), Philip the Chancellor, William of Auvergne, and Richard of St. Victor.

There were the more recent works (mainly by friars) of Grosseteste (2), Roger Bacon (2), Henry of Ghent, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Hugh of St. Cher, Thomas Gallus, Robert Holcot, and an anonymous commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Science and medicine were poorly represented—the former by Euclid and a *Geometria*, the latter by Platearius and Philaretus. The only law books are a copy of the *Decretales* and Raymond of Penafort's *Summa de casibus*. As is usual in friars' collections at this date, the number of literary works is small—only the *Epistles* of Seneca; a copy of Claudian was probably received by the Perth house later than the thirteenth century.

There are no early lists of books belonging to the houses of the Austin Hermits or of the Carmelites in the thirteenth century. Surviving manuscripts from houses of both these Orders are sparse and do not give a useful picture of the contents of their libraries.

The most important changes that affected the history of librarianship occurred in the organization of libraries. No longer were books kept in chests to be handed out annually for use; a convent's collection was largely in the possession of individual friars or, as the number of available books increased, in cases for consultation.³⁵

Books, according to a minister general of the Dominicans, Humbert of Romans, are "our armaments, the authorities which we take from holy books are like the arms with which we defend ourselves and fight against our enemies," while at the chapter held at Florence in 1257 books are called *arma nostre militie*.³⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that the friars and, slightly later, the university scholars made many regulations to facilitate

easy access to books. The evidence is, as usual, difficult to obtain and to assess, and it is often necessary to infer earlier practice from later documentation. The fact that friars could not own anything complicated the rules for the allocation and preservation of the Order's books. A distinction was made between the books that belonged to the province and were issued to students by the provincial (and, in the case of the Franciscans, the custody) and those possessed by the convents, the responsibility of priors. Whether lent to him by the provincial or the prior, a student would have at least the basic textbooks often issued to him for life. He would, however, be especially dependent on the conventual library for other works. The administration of this library was a vital factor for the friar seeking information. The Dominicans had appointed a librarian certainly by 1246 and probably earlier. The duties proposed by Humbert of Romans have been quoted many times, so that a full transcription of his recommendations is not necessary here. I shall point out only the significant elements. First, the library "should have many shelves and divisions in which the books may be placed according to the various subjects with signs written on each." "Once or twice a year the books should be collected together in some convenient place and inspected to discover whether any are missing or are being destroyed by book-worms."³⁷ The librarian kept an account of the books lent out, as in the *Assignationes librorum* at Barcelona.

His most important proposal was that each convent should have a reference collection attached by chains to one or more desks. If, as seems probable, Humbert was writing about 1270, this would be the earliest record of a chained library and of a separate reference collection. The first division of this kind at the Sorbonne is dated 1289.³⁸ Certainly, under the influence of these two sources, by the end of the fourteenth century this arrangement was fairly common in friars' libraries and in colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.

Records of the contents of a library were obviously necessary to check that all books were present or had been borrowed. Simple inventories had been kept for earlier libraries, but as the requirements of students became more demanding, inventories became much more detailed. Unfortunately, we have no specimens of this new feature for the thirteenth century from mendicant Orders, but a fragment survives of a catalogue of the Sorbonne about 1274.³⁹ Every item in each volume is listed, even to an analysis of two manuscripts of Augustine's letters. The opening words of the second or third and the penultimate or ultimate folios are given to provide positive identification. Finally the name of the donor (if known) is added as well as the value of the codex or the sum for which it could be pledged. In the next century this became the standard method of cataloguing, as in the York Austin Hermits' library in 1372.

Just as today scholars may not always find what they need in their in-

stitution's library and have to look for it in other catalogues or lists, so medieval students might have had recourse to other collections. In the latter decades of the thirteenth century the Sorbonne possessed a collection of catalogues of other Parisian houses. A fragment survives of the whole catalogue of the manuscripts of Ste. Geneviève and the first portion of the catalogue of St. Germain-des-Prés, part of a larger work.⁴⁰ It has been suggested that the sheet of parchment making up these catalogues was posted on a wall or door for the use of all to permit the locating of books not in the Sorbonne.

A full union catalogue was compiled by Franciscans, probably from the Oxford house, sometime after 1250. The *Registrum Anglie de libris actorum et doctorum* lists 1,412 works (many with their incipits) of some 98 authors, largely patristic. Nearly all of these works are accompanied by an indication of their location in from one to thirty libraries in England, Scotland, and Wales. This is done by means of arabic numerals that refer to a key numbered list of 189 libraries prefixed to the register; this list is arranged geographically according to the eight custodies of the English Franciscan province.⁴¹ Regrettably, we do not know what use was made of the *Registrum* by Franciscans. Perhaps books could be borrowed on payment of a pledge, as was general practice in the monastic Orders and as was permissible for the mendicants.

I have attempted to show that between the end of the twelfth and the second half of the thirteenth centuries there was a fundamental difference in the attitude to books and libraries. There was an almost aggressive appetite for aids to simplify access to information required for study—particularly by the mendicant Orders in their quest for knowledge to support their preaching aims. In friaries and universities, students and their teachers were making use of conventual and college books containing the texts for university teaching and newly devised reference books on a scale that had been impossible earlier. This was indeed a cultural revolution.

Notes

1. J. de Ghellinck, "En marge des catalogues des bibliothèques médiévales," *Miscellanea Francesco Ehrle*, 6 vols. (Rome: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1924), vol. 5, p. 333.

2. **Canterbury**: M. R. James, *The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover* (Cambridge: University Press, 1903), p. 7. **Lanthony**: T. W. Williams, "Gloucestershire Mediaeval Libraries," *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* 31 (1908): 78. **Durham**: *Catalogi veteres librorum ecclesiae cathedralis Dunelm.*, ed. J. Raine with intro. by B. B[otfield], Surtees Society, vol. 7 (London: Nichols, 1838), p. 1. **Rochester**: *Textus Roffensis*, part ii, fos. 224–230, ed. P. Sawyer, *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*, vol. 11 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger,

1962). **Bury St. Edmunds**: M. R. James, *On the Abbey of St. Edmund at Bury*: i. *The Library*, ii, *The Church*, Cambridge Antiquarian Society Octavo Publications, no. 28 (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1895). **Peterborough**: M. R. James, *Lists of Manuscripts Formerly in Peterborough Abbey Library*, Bibliographical Society Transactions, Supplement no. 5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1926). **Burton-upon-Trent**: Twelfth-century catalogue ed. by H. Omont in *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 9 (1892): 201, and by F. A. Hibbert in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries as Illustrated by the Suppression of the Religious Houses of Staffordshire* (London: Pitman, 1910), p. 281. **Reading**: Late-twelfth-century catalogue printed in *English Historical Review* 3 (1888): 117. **Whitby**: Late-twelfth-century catalogue printed in *Cartularium Abbatiae de Whiteby*, vol. 1 [ed. by J. C. Atkinson], Surtees Society, vol. 69 (Durham: Andrews, 1879), p. 341; also in G. H. Becker, *Catalogi bibliothecarum antiqui* (Bonn: Cohen, 1885, repr. 1973), no. 109. **Coventry**: List of books written for the church by John de Bruges "monachus Coventr," in T. Hearne, *History and Antiquities of Glastonbury* (Oxford: at the Theater, 1722), p. 291.

3. **Bridlington**: Early-thirteenth-century list of books printed by H. Omont in *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 9 (1892): 203. **Waltham**: Early-thirteenth-century catalogue printed by M. R. James in "Manuscripts from Essex Monastic Houses," *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, new series 21 (1933): 38. **Flaxley**: D. W. Bell, "The Books of Flaxley Abbey," *Analecta Cisterciensia* 43 (1987): 92-110.

4. European libraries of the period have collections that, except for a few local variations, compare closely to the English model: in Germany the Benedictines at **Muri**, **Michelsberg**, **Wessobrun**, **Regensburg** (Prüll), and **Prüfening** and the Augustinian Canons at **Passau** (*Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands* [Munich: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1918-], I, 210, 365; III, 184; IV, 400; IV, 416; and IV, 53); the Benedictines in Austria at **St. Lambrecht**, **Salzburg**, and **Lambach** (*Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs* [Vienna: Holzhausen, 1915-], III, 80; IV, 66; and V, 53); the French houses of **Corbie**, **St-Amand**, and **Cluny** (L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des Manuscrits* [Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1868-1881], II, 428; II, 449; II, 458) and **St-Bertin**, **Anchin**, **St-Vaast**, **Arras**, and **Bec** (Becker, *Catalogi* nos. 77, 121, 125, 127); in Italy the abbey of **Nonantola** (G. Gullotta, *Gli antichi cataloghi e i codici della Abbazia di Nonantola* [Vatican: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1955], p. 31, and J. Ruyschaert, *Les manuscrits de l'abbaye de Nonantola* [Vatican: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1955], p. 20 [Studi e Testi 182, 182 bis]); and in Spain the Carthusians of **St. Maria**, **Poblet** (*Bibliotheca patrum latinorum Hispaniae*, ed. W. von Hartel [Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1887], I, 464).

5. One of the first was Alexander Nequam; see R. W. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1217)*, ed. M. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), especially chapter 6.

6. *Regula S. Benedicti*, ch. 48 (Migne, *Patrologia latina*, vol. 66, col. 704).

7. *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, tr. by D. Knowles (London: Nelson, 1951).

8. A distribution of books is illustrated in the Vivian Bible 845/6, M. Baur-Heinhold, *Schöne alte Bibliotheken*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Callwey, 1974), pl. 25. The monks are shown bringing books to St. Jerome, who sits between two book-boxes and hands books to monks who make their way into a building.

9. D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1963), p. 524, states that "it would normally be a question of religious books for private reading; the service-books and Bibles would be excluded, together with all works of classical literature, history and sciences." The evidence from English lists would seem to confirm this view: **Christ Church and St. Augustine's Canterbury** (James, *Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover*, pp. 502ff.), **Ramsey** (printed by R.

Bressie, *Modern Language Notes* 54 [1939]: 249), **St. Albans** (R. W. Hunt, "The Library of the Abbey of St. Albans," in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays Presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. M. B. Parkes and A. G. Watson [London: Scolar Press, 1978], pp. 254ff.), and **Thorney** (K. W. Humphreys, *Bodleian Library Record* 2 [1941-1949]: 205-210). Continental loan lists of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are often similar (e.g., **Mondsee**, eleventh century [*Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs*, V, 71]), but nontheological works are mentioned for **Freising**: Terence in the twelfth century and Ovid, Sallust, and Hyginus in the thirteenth century. At **Tegernsee** in the twelfth century Ovid *de ponto* and *epistolae* are on loan; at **Passau** in 1255 Aesop and Seneca and in 1257 Palladius, Solinus, and the *De mirabilibus Romae* (*Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands*, IV, 627, 751, 32). All these lists are very fragmentary and are not certainly records of Lenten distributions. The only definite evidence is contained in a list from **Farfa** of the eleventh century, which begins "De brevi librorum quod fit in capite quadragesimae": sixty-two books are mentioned, including the *Historia* of Livy and presumably Bede's *Historia Anglorum* (T. Gottlieb, *Über mittelalterliche Bibliotheken* [Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1890; repr. Graz: Akademischer Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1955], p. 189).

10. B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

11. F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium commentariorum in Sententiae P. Lombardi*, 2 vols. (Herbipoli/Würzburg: Schönningh, 1947).

12. H. Kantorowicz, *Studies in the Glossators of the Roman Law* (Cambridge: University Press, 1938).

13. S. Kuttner, *Repertorium der Kanonistik (1140-1234)* (Vatican: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1937).

14. C. H. Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* (New York: Ungar, 1960, repr.).

15. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister*, pp. 67ff.

16. D. A. Callus, "The Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 29 (1943): 229-281.

17. B. Lawn, *The Salernitan Questions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

18. See H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3 vols., ed. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden (London: Oxford University Press, 1936); and A. B. Cobban, *The Medieval Universities, Their Development and Organisation* (London: Methuen, 1975).

19. Epist. 71, *Patrologia Latina* 207, 219, quoted in G. Paré, A. Brunet, and P. Tremblay, *La renaissance du XIIe siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1933), p. 92, note 1.

20. See Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp. 181, 520.

21. J. Destrez, *La pecia dans les manuscrits universitaires du XIIIe et du XIVe siècle* (Paris: Vautrain, 1935).

22. R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons: Studies in the Manipulus Florum of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1979), pp. 26ff.

23. Ibid., p. 9

24. Ibid., p. 19.

25. J. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

26. W. A. Hinnebusch, O. P., *The History of the Dominican Order*, 2 vols. (New York: Alba House, 1966-1973).

27. T. Kaeppeli, O. P., "Dominicana Barcinonensia: Assignationes librorum

professiones novitorum (s. xiii-xv),” *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 37 (1977): 47-118.

28. Etienne Baluze, *Miscellanea*, 4 vols., [ed.] J. M. Mansi (Lucae: apud V. Junctinium, 1761-1764), IV, 602-604.

29. “Cronaca del Convento di S. Caterina, Pisa, O. P.,” ed. I. Bonaini, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, ser. I, 6 (1845): 412-414; and F. Pelster, S. J., “Die Bibliothek von Santa Caterina zu Pisa,” in *Xenia Thomistica* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1925), III, 9.

30. For extant manuscripts of all four orders, see N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd ed. (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), and *Supplement*, ed. A. G. Watson (London: Royal Historical Society, 1987).

31. A. G. Little and R. Easterling, *The Franciscans and Dominicans of Exeter* (Exeter: Wheaton, 1927), p. 59.

32. Ipswich Central Library: MS. of Albertus de Saxonia, *Sophismata*, flyleaf. An inaccurate English translation with facsimile is given in *Ipswich Library Journal* 46 (1939): 14-17.

33. R. W. Hunt, “The Library of Robert Grosseteste,” in *Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop*, ed. D. A. Callus (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955, repr. 1969), pp. 121-145.

34. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*.

35. For a fuller account of the library organization of the friars, see K. W. Humphreys, *The Book Provisions of the Mediaeval Friars, 1215-1400* (Amsterdam: Erasmus, 1964).

36. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

38. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des Manuscrits*, II, 181.

39. *Ibid.*, II, 180.

40. Rouse and Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons*, p. 26.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 24. The *Registrum* is being edited by the Rouses.